had caused some of the cross-stays to split asunder, and for some time the entire demolition of the whole was expected. A number of men were quickly set to work, and having placed shoring poles under the arch, the dead weight was taken from the top; but so dangerous was the arch considered that it was found necessary to stop up the thoroughfare, and neither passengers on foot nor in vehicles have since been allowed to pass through the street." Mr. Barlow, the company's engineer reports that there were 120 tons of bricks on one girder alone.

Surely Mr. Barlow must be in error, or has been mistaken by the printers. We have received five communications on the subject. According to one of them there were not more than 8,000 bricks on the arch. A second says, "the girders are about 11 feet apart, and the one that broke about 41 feet 6 inches long to its bearings; so you may form an idea if it was possible the girder could have been so loaded with bricks as he states, when, in fact, they did not extend on to the bridge more than ten feet. I question if Mr. Barlow would like to test the remaining girders with half the 120 tons he speaks so confidently of, added to the present formation: he surely must mean *cwts.* and not *tons*, which would, in my opinion, be nearer the proof."

We shall probably know something more about it before our next publication. If the roofs and bridges here are being cut as fine as the roof at the Bricklayers-arms station by the same company, to which we drew attention a few weeks ago, we shall have more failures before long, or theory is all at fault.

THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST. PETER, AT DUNSTABLE.*

The general plan of the present Priory Church of St. Peter, Dunstable, is comprised in a nave, two aisles, with a tower at the north-west corner. The nave is composed of seven bays, separated by piers, and niches, in two stages. The piers are of the ordinary character of the Anglo-Norman style; and consist of a series of cylindrical shafts, recessed, and semi-detached alternately, with cushion and carved capitals, and square abaci. The shafts on the internal sides above their capitals, have moulded arches, springing from them with hood mouldings, cut with a chevron ornament. Above these arches which open into the aisles, is a billet moulded string, formerly continuous, but now partially cut away. The centre shafts and the two quarter shafts on the faces of the piers detach themselves from the rest, and are carried up to the level of the springing of the heads of the clerestory windows: the two quarter shafts finish with capitals of carved foliage and square abaci, and have segmental arches moulded, turned from pier to pier, enclosing the clerestory windows. The central shaft, which continues up higher, is surmounted by a stone corbel and wooden angel, supporting the present tiebeams of principals. The roof of the nave is of oak, with the ends of the principals and tiebeams supported by carved figures standing upon a bird, resting upon stone corbels of late character attached to the central shaft. The principals correspond with the number of piers, and rest upon tiebeams. Each compartment between the principals is subdivided by an intermediate principal, and framed purlins, into twelve smaller compartments or panels, all of them deeply moulded, having enriched bosses of knots of flowers at the intersection of the timbers, and horizontal angels at the feet of the intermediate principals. The exterior of the western front offers a singular combination of three styles, Norman, Early English, and Perpendicular. The principal entrance to the church is through the Anglo-Norman doorway. The depth of the jamb is considerably increased by two piers on each side, on which are sculptured bas-reliefs, now almost obliterated. Four cylindric shafts recessed, crowned by carved capitals with square abaci, form the jambs. The capitals vary: one represents David playing on the harp;—another a bishop, with mitre and crosier;—a third, two men with birds holding a scroll. Enriched arch mouldings spring from the capitals of the shafts.

* From a paper read by Mr. G. S. Clarke at a meeting of the Bedfordshire Architectural Society, reported more at length in the *Bedford Times*.

The precise date of the foundation of the church is somewhat obscure. Prior Richard de Morins commences the chronicle of Dunstaple by the following:—A.D. 1135, King Henry 1st died in the 35th year of his reign, in France, but was buried at Reading. He founded the Abbey and Monastery there and at Cirencester, and the Priory of Prato apud Rothomagum, and the Priory of Dunstaple. One of the witnesses to the charter was Robert Blois, Bishop of Hereford, and he was not bishop till 1131; so that it may fairly be presumed that between 1131 and 1135 (the year of the death of the king) the Priory of St. Peter, for a Prior and 12 Austin or Black Canons, was founded at Dunstaple. The register at Lincoln, quoted by Dunstable and Bishop Tanner, gives Thomas as the first prior, elected in 1196, and who died in 1202; but either the register must be defective, or the priory must have been without a head for 27 years, which is highly improbable. According to the chronicle, the almonry was erected in 1208; and in 1213 (the same year the town was burnt by accident) "Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, dedicated the church in the presence of knights, barons, abbots, priors, and many nobles, but not many of the common people." The dedication followed the completion of the entire edifice, and the latter must consequently have taken no less a period than 77 years to erect. This appears very long, but at the same time it will assist somewhat in unravelling the web of mystery that has hung over the west front of this church from time immemorial. Starting with Mr. Beatham's theory, and being assured from the statements in the chronicle before quoted that the church was cruciform in plan,—presuming that choir, presbytery, and transepts were of pure Anglo-Norman (the prevailing architecture at the time of the foundation and for 40 years after),—observing by reference to the church that the same style is to be found throughout the entire nave, including the great western door, and the three groined arches of the south aisle, to a certain level, which level is determined at the billet-moulded string above the nave arches, the following inferences are drawn:—First, that the monks, under the royal patronage, made a prodigious start at the outset, laid down the entire plan, and commenced the whole of the entire fabric from extreme east to extreme west; carrying up the work to the before-mentioned billet-moulded string below the present clerestory. Secondly, that the great scale of the work, and perhaps the troubles of Stephen and Henry the Second's reigns affecting their exchequers, they ceased labouring at the nave aisles, and concentrated their strength and resources upon the eastern portions, and completed them for the purposes of worship; then gradually advancing westward, they finished the two first bays of the nave to their present height. Thirdly, that these works occupied a considerable period of time, during which a change from Norman to Early Pointed, generally termed Transitional, had begun to display itself throughout England. Fourthly, that this change can be detected in all the succeeding bays of the nave; in the delicacy of the carving and foliage of the capitals, as well as in the character of the arch mouldings themselves, without materially affecting the character and outline of the original design. Fifthly, that this transitional character itself was then superseded by the more correct, because more developed, Early English or Pointed Style; as exhibited in the open gallery and upper portion of the west front, lower stages of the tower, and north-west turret. And lastly, that the whole church was roofed in, and finally completed for dedication, in A.D. 1213, at a time when the Early Pointed Style was in its zenith and greatest purity. Reducing these inferences into a more simple form of dates, they would be determined as follows:—The whole of that part of the church eastward of the nave, now destroyed—including the two first bays of the nave, their entire height, the remaining bays to the level of the billet-moulded string, the existing ground bays of the south aisle, the great western doorway, and interlaced wall panelling—was erected during a period extending from 1135 to 1170, and may be termed Anglo-Norman. The other portions of the billet-moulded string of the other six bays on each side the nave, exclusive of the clerestory lights, which are insertions, between 1170 and 1190. The greater part of the west front, the west side of the present tower to the level of the quatrefoil band on the same, the adjoining turret to the level of the columns at the angles with painted arches over, between 1160 and 1213. The tower itself, the north aisle, a portion of the south aisle, the screens and carved wood work, the roofs of the nave and aisles, the massive piers at the eastern end of the church, all these are undoubtedly specimens of the architecture of the fifteenth century termed Perpendicular.

CHURCHES AND CHAPELS.

The spire of Keysoe Church was struck by lightning lately, and rent to a considerable extent, and a large breach made over the window of the tower.——It is proposed to enlarge the church of St. John Moulsham, Chelmsford, by the projection of transepts, and of a chancel with chancel aisles of corresponding dimensions. The estimated cost of these works, by which 427 additional seats would be obtained, is about 1,300*l.*, of which nearly 300*l.* remain to be raised. An equal outlay would be required for the completion of the entire plan by the erection of a tower, a steeple, and two porches.——The works at Pakenham Church have been completed, and the church is now enlarged by the addition of north and south transepts, the latter built at the expense of Lord Calthorpe. The repairs and enlargement have been under the direction of Mr. S. S. Teulon, architect, and executed by Messrs. Baldiston and Son, of Ipswich, builders, at a cost of 1,600*l.*, the parish providing the carting.——The restoration of St. Michael's Church, Cambridge, has progressed so far, that the church was re-opened on Friday in last week. The aim of Mr. G. G. Scott, the architect employed by Trinity College and St. Michael's parish, has been, we understand, to restore the fabric, as nearly as could be, to what it was originally. The roof has been rebuilt of oak, with kingposts, &c. It is covered with Colley Weston slates, and surmounted at the east and west ends with crosses of the Decorated style. The piers and foundations of the building have been under-pinned where necessary. The pillars, where mutilated by galleries, pews, and tablets, have been restored, as well as the mullions of the windows, mouldings, string-courses, throughout the church; the walls replastered, and the accumulated paint and whitewash scraped off. Arches resting on massive buttresses have been thrown across the north and south aisles, to support the large chancel arch, the piers of which were considered insecure. The flooring has been excavated, filled in with concrete, and ventilated, the church warmed with hot water, and the churchyard lowered to the basement moulding of the building. The east window has been restored to its original size and glazed with ground glass, while the west has been opened up by the removal of the organ gallery. The tower has been also thrown open, and the whole church has been reseated in carved oak. Many other minor restorations have been, and are still being, effected by Messrs. Quinsee and Attack, the builders. The carving was done by Mr. Rattee.——A new Wesleyan Chapel has been opened at Eaton Socon. It is in the Norman style, and adapted for 300 persons, according to the *Cambridge Chronicle*, Mr. Jubb, of Eaton, builder.——St. Nicholas's Church, Nottingham, has been partially restored and cleaned.——The new church of Llandilo has been opened for divine worship. The cost of rebuilding was above 4,000*l.*, more than one-third of which Lord Dynevor and his family contributed.——Extensive alterations have been made in St. Peter's church, Eldad, Plymouth.——The Wesleyan chapel at Oldham has been enlarged, and fronted in the Doric style, on a plan by Mr. Simpson, of Leeds, architect: sittings increased from 800 to 1,200.

Industrial School, Plaistow.—We are informed that, in reply to the advertisement for designs, for St. George's Industrial School, proposed to be built at Plaistow, Essex, for 300 children, the guardians received on Tuesday last fifty-six sets of designs, with estimates ranging from 4,500*l.* to 27,000*l.*

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